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PRELIMINARY STUDIES
of the
TEXAS CATHOLIC
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TEXAS KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS HISTORICAL
COMMISSION



RAMÓN EXPEDITION:
ESPINOSA'S DIARY OF 1716

By

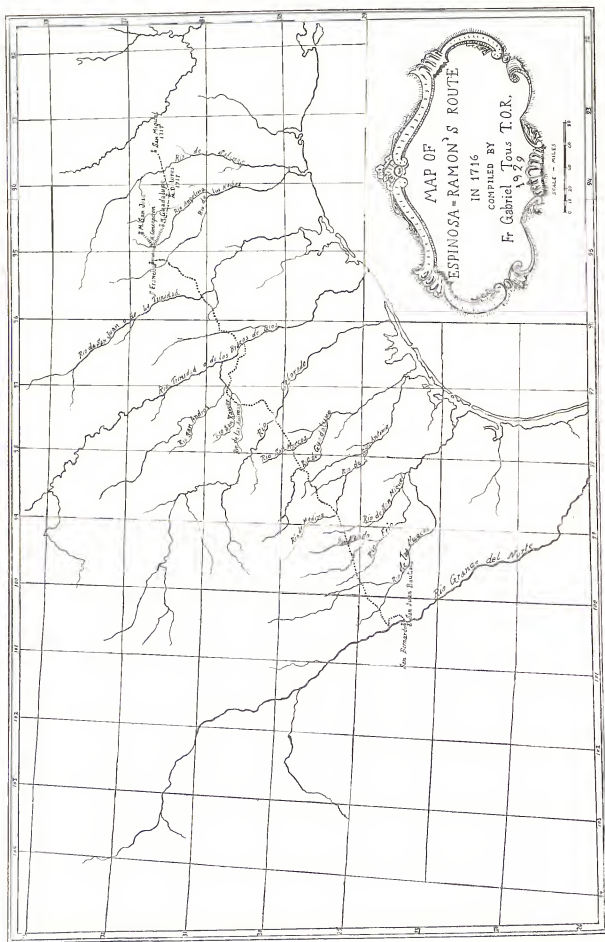
REV. GABRIEL TOUS, T. O. R.

*Corresponding Member of the Texas K. of C. Historical
Commission*

Reprint from Mid-America
Volume XII, Number 4, April, 1930

THE
ZEPHYRUS
1911





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FOREWORD

The publication for the first time of a translation of the diary of Espinosa relating to his entry into Texas in 1716 has been an effort to present a faithful, exact, and literal rendition of the original, and that is what gives it a positive value to the historical scholar. Some Spanishisms will therefore be found in it and these have been permitted to remain so that the literal sense of the chronicle may be conserved.

The diary is not written with that phraseological pomp in which other works of Father Espinosa, principally his *Cronica*, abound. They were written in conformity with the age with many comparisons and digressions which are out of place and make the perusal of them wearisome and diffuse. Though the style of the diary of 1716 is sober and concise, it is not lacking in beautiful descriptions perhaps somewhat exaggerated and with poetic tints, as for instance the portrayals of the rivers Medina, San Antonio, and Guadalupe; nor is richness and minuteness of detail wanting as in the narration of the meeting of the Asinai or Texas Indians and the novel and very interesting ceremonial displayed at the reception of the members of the expedition. There is also a spice of good humor to season the diary. Incidents are related and observations made that did not escape the sharp eye and the ready wit of Father Espinosa.

Of the historic and geographic value of the diary there is no necessity to speak since this is obvious. Proper names of persons and of places, descriptions of land traversed, and dates give the historian and topographer invaluable details that are necessary for the geography and history of the first missions in Texas.

What may be regarded as somewhat far-fetched is the record of distances travelled day after day. If one considers the large train which they carried: beasts of burden, cattle and goats, soldiers and missionaries, extra men and women, the distances indeed seem long. They travelled eight, nine, and even ten leagues in a single day through places where they had to open their own pathway.

The original manuscript of this document is in the *Archivo General y Publico de Mexico, Provincias Internas, Volume 181*.

A transcript of the diary by Mr. Garcia was found among the documents pertaining to the life and memoirs of the Venerable Father Fray Antonio Margil de Jesus in the Garcia Latin-American Library at the University of Texas and from this copy the following translation has been made.

The translator wishes to acknowledge with thanks the valuable corrections suggested in this rendition by the Editor-in-chief of *Mid-America* and for other careful revisions made by Rev. Paul J. Foik, C. S. C., Ph. D., of St. Edward's University, Austin, Texas, and by Professor Carlos E. Castañeda, A. M., of the Latin-American Library, University of Texas.

RAMÓN EXPEDITION:
ESPINOSA'S DIARY OF 1716

Translated by

REV. GABRIEL TOUS, T. O. R.

In the name of the Most Holy Trinity. The diary of the expedition from the Rio Grande del Norte to the Province of Texas, undertaken by order of His Excellency, the Duke of Linares, Viceroy of this New Spain, in concurrence with the two Colleges of the Propaganda Fide of Santa Cruz of Querétaro and Our Lady of Guadalupe of Zacatecas, compiled and written by Rev. Father Fray Isidro Felis de Espinosa. Domingo Ramón was captain of twenty-five soldiers and carried along also twenty-two other men with eight married women to attend to the beasts of burden.

We registered from the College of Querétaro Rev. Father Fray Isidro Felis de Espinosa, President, the Rev. Father Fray Francisco Hidalgo, the Apostolic Preachers; Rev. Fathers Fray Benito Sanchez, Fray Gabriel de Vergara and Fray Manuel Castellanos. The Rev. Father Fray Antonio Margil de Jesus of the College of Zacatecas became seriously ill at the Mission of San Juan Bautista on the Rio Grande. The Apostolic Preacher Rev. Father Fray Pedro de Santa Maria y Mendoza, the lay-brother Fray Francisco Xavier Cubillos and Fray Domingo de Vrioste with the habit of Donado remained with him. Don Luis de San Dionisio, (Louis of St. Denis), a Frenchman, was captain of the convoy, and two others of the same nationality enrolled with him.

A. D. 1716

April 25—Saturday. Feast of St. Mark the Evangelist. Mass was sung at the Mission of San Bernardo; rogation prayers proper to the day recited, and a procession formed. These were offered for the success of our journey. At the conclusion of the ceremonies all accompanied the priest who went to administer the Viaticum to our Rev. Father Margil. In the afternoon the Fathers Fray Francisco Hidalgo, Fray Benito Sanchez, Fray Gabriel Vergara and Fray Manuel Castellanos crossed to the other side of the Rio Grande. Commenting on the Gospel of the day *Designavit Dominus* (the Lord hath chosen) all gave thanks to His Divine Majesty for having chosen us for so glor-

ious an enterprise. His command to His ministers in the persons of the Apostles: *Ite, ecce ego mitto vos*, "Go, behold I send you," gave new vigor to our souls. We travelled this day two leagues.

April 26—Sunday. Having remained to put in order the missions which were in my charge, I renewed my joy in the Gospel of the day, that of the Good Shepherd, which concludes with these words of Our Lord: "And other sheep have I, that are not of this fold; them also must I bring, and there will be but one fold and one shepherd." Understanding this almost to the letter of the Texas Gentiles, I set out that afternoon with the Apostolic Preachers, Fray Matias Sans de San Antonio and Fray Pedro de Sta. Maria y Mendoza. All who preceded us met us on the other side of the Rio del Norte with salute of firearms and general rejoicing. The river carried less water than at other times. A sermon was given with the intention of continuing it every third day. Some who had not yet complied with their Easter duty received Communion. At night, we sing, alternating in chorus the *Alabado* in metre. This we always do on leaving our camping ground. We are now two leagues to the northeast of our Missions according to observations made by an experienced Religious.

April 27—Monday. We set out from the bank of the Rio Grande towards the Encampment of Cuervo, three leagues to the northwest, but, finding little water we returned to the river going two leagues to the west, beyond what is called Diego Ramón.¹

This evening another sermon was preached; and just as it concluded, a hurricane swept down upon us, a tempest so violent that we raised our voices in supplication to the Mother of Sorrows and to the saints of our devotion. It uprooted the stakes of the tents to which we were clinging, and broke with a lively rain which, however, did not last long. We travelled this day five leagues.

April 28—Tuesday. We went in search of water to the northeast over level ground with some sparse mesquite flats. On the way there were some pools of water, and an accident occurred. One of the Frenchmen fell from his horse but was not hurt. The Cuerva del Leon, which has plenty of water, was reached. Captain Louis of St. Denis returned to the presidio for an Indian. This day's travel was five leagues.

¹ The place "Diego Ramón" is called in the Ramón's Diary "Paso de Diego Ramón."

April 29—Wednesday. After the celebration of three Masses we left the Cueva, pursuing the direction of east-northeast on the lookout for the Carrizo. We passed a few low hills without trees, and crossed some sandy brooks and several marshes with mesquites and Indian fig trees, whose fruit was not yet ripe. By the pathway leading from the Cueva to the spring called Caramanchel were pools of water. The heat was so depressing that we stopped at some pools of rain-water. There we were haled by mosquitoes which, playing their little trumpets, entertained us both day and night to their heart's content. At daybreak some of our horses were missing, five Bozales Indians having taken them off to their settlement. The Indians were pursued; three of them apprehended and taken before the Captain who, recognizing their low state of mind, decided that their own fear and confusion served them for punishment. A sermon was given this evening. Five leagues had been travelled.

April 30—Thursday. Through some level clearings with pools of water, we set out for the Carrizo. A grove of mesquite trees and nopals was crossed. Having travelled three leagues we stopped at this side of the ponds of the Carrizo.

May 1—Friday. Masses having been said by most of the Religious, we proceeded eastward over level ground and came in sight of flowers and pasture in the fields. To celebrate the feast of the day, that of the apostles St. Philip and St. James, as well as to let the horses graze and refresh themselves, we stopped at the spring of water, having travelled two leagues.

May 2—Saturday. By northeast a quarter to the east we went through small woods or groves of mesquite trees and little plains surrounded by trees. We found a great deal of wild majoram; and passed a large rancheria, old and depopulated, and a dry arroyo, with holm-oak groves. Following the same course we came to a stream with pools of water. Around these were many oak trees. From this stream to the Nueces River, which was almost dry, having only puddles, there was an abundance of ash trees, walnut trees, mulberry trees and others of various kinds. Under the scorching sun we travelled this day seven leagues.

May 3—Sunday. The celebration of the feast of the Finding of the Holy Cross detained us. Seven Masses were said at which some persons received Communion. In the evening the military salute was given and a cross which we had made and blessed

was carried in procession. Placing it in the ground we reverently venerated it with hymns of the day and named the place the Encampment of the Holy Cross.

May 4—Monday. Leaving the Nueces River we proceeded east-northeast as far as the turtle pond. The land, which is for the greater part of the way level, is so rough and swampy that five men fell from their horses, some being thrown from their animals by the others. One of them had an apparently miraculous escape for he was caught underneath his horse. Although well covered with dust he came forth unhurt. We stopped at the pond mentioned, having travelled two leagues.

May 5—Tuesday. Having found good pasture and running water, we tarried at this place. Nothing important occurred except the marriage of the soldier whose banns had been previously published. This event was celebrated by the firing of guns, the Religious taking part. Some went fishing and an eel was among the fish caught.

May 6—Wednesday. Over low hills and plains with some mesquite trees on the knolls, we set out towards the east and east-northeast to find the River Frio. Flowers, praising their Creator, adorned the country. There were some pools of water on the way and among the oaks near the River Frio was a bubbling spring. As far as that place we had walked five leagues.

May 7—Thursday. We continued east-northeast by the base of a low hill as far as some large ponds of water. In the midst of the forest we found the passage of the River Frio which was dry; trees and grapevines loaded its banks; then we saw a great deal of brazilwood. Beyond the river, which is one in name only, we approached a flock of turkeys and caught two of them. The expedition stopped at some creeks at our left and we named this place the Encampment of San Lorenzo. A sermon was given. Four leagues were travelled this day.

May 8—Friday. Feast of the Apparition of St. Michael. We went on between east and east-northeast over a league of level ground. There we found three rancherias of Indians of the tribe of the Paraguas. Farther on in the same direction we passed through glens of mesquite clumps, with pools of water. We intended to reach the Arroyo Hondo, so some of us went ahead and arrived there, but its barrenness obliged us to turn back until we met the others. Being informed of our disappointment, they stopped the beasts of burden at pools of rainwater.

We named this place the Encampment of St. Michael. Those who went to the arroyo travelled eight leagues, the main body, four.

May 9—Saturday. We tarried here in order to select a suitable place. Each of us said Mass. The only things noteworthy were the excessive heat, the stillness of the waters which, had they not been calm, would have stopped us by their currents, and the arrival of a Mesquite Indian, who informed us of the great number of people living together on the Colorado River.

May 10—Sunday. This morning only three Masses were said. Then proceeding almost always towards east-northeast, we arrived at the Arroyo Hondo, where a very convenient passage was found. To reach this arroyo we had to come over a smaller stream between a forest of oaks and a thicket of brambles and briars. Having crossed the Arroyo Hondo, we came through a few clusters of mesquites to a woodland of oaks, poplars and other trees with two creeks of good water. This place was named the Encampment of St. Rita, and a cross of wood was erected there. On observing the sun, the latitude was found to be twenty-eight degrees and forty minutes. We walked four leagues.

May 11—Monday. After the celebration of two Masses we went on east-northeast through level ground, with clusters of oaks and pools of water. A few hills and plains with small stones or gravel were crossed. Then continuing our course as far as some large creeks we stopped, because of the intense heat of the sun, and because we had to carry a sick Religious. Only two leagues were travelled this day.

May 12—Tuesday. From the place aforementioned, we continued east-northeast through glens, partly level and partly hilly. Leaving on both sides many oak groves, we came to the pond called Pita. This pond is very spacious. In it fish and turtle are plentiful. They peeped above the water but not within reach of our hands. Among some clusters of oaks we found a grapevine, rather parched and dry, whose trunk measured almost a yard in circumference, a fact to which all the Religious and many other persons were witnesses. A sermon was given. This day only two leagues were covered.

May 13—Wednesday. After Masses were said, we set out through a forest of oaks and scattered mesquite clumps to find

the River Medina, going a league to north-northeast. Then over rough ground with many groves of holm-oaks, gray oaks, and walnut trees we went two more leagues between northeast and east-northeast, turning to the north another league. Having crossed some level ground and groves of box-trees, we went right through a very spacious forest in the direction of east-northeast. Then making some deviations to the northeast we reached the Medina River. It was after midday when we arrived there tired out from the heat and very hungry. By the banks of this river were many poplar trees, blackberry bushes and grapevines on which we saw some green grapes. Not trifling was the trouble which we had this evening, when the horses were taken to the river to be bathed. They got into such depth, and so much confusion followed that eighty-two of them were drowned, and we were left bewildered. This and other depressing occurrences gave us reason to suspect that the Lord had given permission to the common enemy to dishearten our expedition. Therefore, not to give place to his wiles, we offered [the following morning] a Mass of thanksgiving that worse did not happen. At this Mass all the Religious received Communion, asking Our Lord to look on us with eyes of mercy. Ten leagues were travelled this day.

May 14—Thursday. We set out from the aforesaid river in the direction of east-northeast through hills and dales all covered with very green gramagrass. Some flint stones were found all along the way to the Arroyo de Leon, which is three leagues distant from the river. In this stream there are pools of water. From thence by northeast we entered the plain at the San Antonio River. At the end of the plain there is a small forest of sparse mesquites, and some oaks. To it succeeds the water of the San Pedro; sufficient for a mission.² Along the bank of the latter, which has a thicket of all kinds of wood, and by an open path we arrived at the River San Antonio. This river is very desirable [for settlement] and favorable for its pleasantness, location, abundance of water, and multitude of fish. It is surrounded by very tall nopals, poplars, elms, grapevines, black mulberry trees, laurels, strawberry vines and genuine fan-palms. There is a great deal of flax and wild hemp, an abundance of maiden-hair fern and many medicinal herbs.

² Arroyo de Leon probably is the Leon Creek of today, west of the San Antonio. San Pedro Creek still flows through the town. In the Ramón's Diary we read about San Pedro Springs.

Merely in that part of the density of its grove which we penetrated, seven streams of water meet. Those, together with others concealed by the brushwood, form at a little distance its copious waters, which are clear, crystal and sweet. In these are found catfish, sea fish, *piltonte*, *catan* and alligators. Undoubtedly there are also various other kinds of fish that are most savory. This place mellowed the dismal remembrance of the preceding one. Its luxuriance is enticing for the founding of missions and villages, for both its plains and its waters encourage settlement. We travelled this day seven leagues.

May 15—Friday. We stopped at this river where, on account of its being the Feast of the Patron of Madrid, St. Isidro Labrador (my patron saint) I sang High Mass, which was solemnized by the voices of my dear Father companions. There was no scarcity of good large fish for the feast, which was accompanied by the accustomed military salute. The enjoyment of this day compensated us somewhat for the hardships of the journey.

May 16—Saturday. We departed from the aforesaid river half a league to the northeast. Then proceeding east-northeast, through mesquite flats with but few trees, we traversed another league through a rich and flowery region, and half a league to the northeast, we stopped at the Arroyo Salado. In the bed of this stream we found wild vine stocks which appeared to be recently hand planted. Beyond the rivulet which is sometimes dry, to our right, a distance of two gun shots, is a spring of water, which could, according to the experienced, irrigate those lands, though it is not very large. We walked two leagues this day.

May 17—Sunday. After three Masses were celebrated, we went through a forest of mesquite clumps, clusters of oaks, and small clearings surrounded by trees, a league to the northeast and a quarter to east-northeast as far as some high hills. Then two other leagues were covered to the east, and the day's journey ended to east-northeast near the edges of a creek. From here Captain Luis de San Dionisio (Louis of St. Denis) with Don Juan de Medar, Frenchmen, and a Quia Indian went ahead to look for the Tejas Indians who were to come to meet us. On observing the sun, the latitude was found to be twenty-nine degrees and thirty-eight minutes. We travelled five leagues.

May 18—Monday. We set out for the Guadalupe River through a dense forest of mesquite clumps, clusters of oaks and

other trees going one league towards the north. Then about half a league to north-northeast we climbed some very high hills; continuing over level ground to northeast a quarter to east-northeast. About two leagues before the river, mesquite clumps and little hills with some ravines came in sight. These led up to a small stream, which issues from the point where the hills meet. Soon we reached the passage of Guadalupe which is made of gravel and is very wide. Groves of inexpressible beauty are found in this vicinity. We stopped at the other bank of the river in a little clearing surrounded by trees, and contiguous to said river. The waters of the Guadalupe are clear, crystal and so abundant that it seemed almost incredible to us that its source arose so near. Composing this river are three principal springs of water which, together with other smaller ones, unite as soon as they begin to flow. There the growth of the walnut trees competes with the poplars. All are crowned by the wild grapevines, which climb up their trunks. They gave promise already in their blossom for the good prospect of their fruit. The white and the black mulberry trees, whose leaves were more than eight inches in length, showed in their sprouts how sharp were the frosts. Willow trees beautified the region of this river with their luxuriant foliage and there was a great variety of plants. It makes a delightful grove for recreation, and the enjoyment of the melodious songs of different birds. Ticks molested us, attaching themselves to our skin. Seven leagues were travelled this day.³

May 19—Tuesday. We advanced by northeast a quarter to east-northeast through a large and dense woodland, nothing inferior to the past, and entered a glen. Soon, at about half a league we came to a river having a good supply of water, which we named San Juan. In this river fish and alligators are numerous. It is not (as many hold) an arm of the River Guadalupe, although it is connected with it, for their sources are very far apart. We travelled only half a league.⁴

May 20—Wednesday. We went on between northeast and east-northeast with some deviations to the northeast, through sparse flats of mesquite trees, with hills in sight. After a distance of three leagues we came upon a copious spring, to our

³ The Guadalupe River here described seems to be the Comal River and the springs are those at New Braunfels.

⁴ San Juan River one-half league from the Guadalupe in this instance is the present Guadalupe.

left, which we named San Bernardino. From here up to the San Marcos River many poplars increased the thickness of this woodland, which had some dry arroyos. By this riverside the foliage was so dense that the ground was never illuminated by the rays of the sun. The wood being so impenetrable we continued our course higher up, between east-northeast and northeast about two leagues, as far as the Arroyo of San Rafael, which had only pools, but those in abundance. We travelled this day nine leagues.

May 21—Thursday. Feast of the Ascension of Our Lord. Out of reverence for the sacredness of the day we refrained from travelling. Seven Masses were said; many persons receiving Communion. In the evening a sermon was given, which has been continued during the journey every third day. In the sky above us a phenomenon appeared in the form of a half-circle, white and dark gray. Its extremities touched the horizon at the points of north-northeast and south-southeast, the sky being all clear. After a good while it became dark and the omen gradually disappeared. Let the critic draw conclusions; I am just stating the incident. What is certain is that its figure resembled a comet having a head like one, and its tail or base being a star. Its train was dark and had the shape of a cypress tree. To some, it seemed a presage of joy; but to others a foreboding of sadness and melancholy.

May 22—Friday. In the direction of northeast we came to a little spring of water which, years ago, I named San Isidro. From thence we advanced to the hills and found some arroyos with pools of water. These led on to the Arroyo of the Garrapatas (ticks) which were this time more merciful. On the way at the distance we sighted holm-oak groves and five brooks. We travelled this day eight leagues.

May 23—Saturday. By the way of north-northeast, three shots of an arquebus distant, we came upon an arroyo which connects with that of the Garrapatas. From here we went half a quarter to the east, and the remainder by north-northeast up to the River Espiritu Santo or Colorado (which is all one and the same river). The way is level with some low hills, though a league before the river there are many oak trees and grapevines with shady spots at intervals. On coming to the one nearest to the river, and having inspected the ford, we decided to return as far as some tall walnut trees where we stopped. Clouds

were gathering in the north, threatening rain, but from it the Lord delivered us. This day's journey was three leagues.

May 24—Sunday. Recommending first in seven Masses our good passage to the Saints of each one's particular devotion, we proceeded to cross the river. Although there were some fears nothing serious happened. It took until midday to transport the cargoes. Both banks of the river are supplied with enormous trees, grapevines, hemp and a species of herb called *ipasote*. An abundance of fish of which we partook is found in its waters. We had to cross to a highland shaded by trees.

May 25—Monday. Until almost noon was spent in putting the goats across, and not a head was lost. The river was very much reduced contrary to what we had anticipated from the preceding rain. On observing the sun, the latitude was found to be thirty degrees and some minutes.

May 26—Tuesday. The expedition did not set out because the Alferéz took three soldiers with him to select a suitable place and to look for Indians. They killed a bison, part of which was brought to the encampment.

May 27—Wednesday. When three Masses were said we passed by a hill of oaks a league to the northeast; then two more leagues northeast a quarter to the east over very open ground, though it was well choked with weeds. In order to arrive at the place intended, not knowing any other way, we crossed two leagues to the south-southeast as far as some pools which were called the Cibolo. The company travelled six leagues.

May 28—Thursday. With a Payaya Indian guiding us we returned the two misdirected leagues, by way of the north-north-west and north, one to each direction. Then through ground the greater part flat, we travelled on four leagues to a copious stream, which we named Arroyo de las Benditas Animas on account of having recommended to the Holy Souls our good guidance.⁵ The banks of this stream are studded with willow trees. According to the sun it was recognized that the latitude was thirty degrees and forty minutes. Here three bisons were killed, whose meat fully satisfied our appetites. Some, not accustomed to this meat, indulged to excess, as may be supposed from the complaints made later of their stomachs. We journeyed this day six leagues.

⁵ Arroyo de las Animas is the present Brushy Creek.

May 29—Friday. Taking advantage of a delay we said seven Masses. In the meantime a place ahead was chosen; the meat got dry; and other fresh food was provided.

May 30—Saturday. We proceeded by way of north-northeast three leagues. Then seeing some smoke and going to investigate the cause of it, we met six Yeripiamos and Mixcales Indians; two of whom arrived in the evening, one a convert of the Mission of San Juan Bautista of the Rio del Norte. The other four set out to notify their captain of our coming. We stopped at some ponds, among a great deal of frondage to which, because of its having the shape of the cells of a bee-hive we gave the name of San Pedro de Alcantara. This afternoon, we sang our Vespers and that part of Matins and Lauds which we are accustomed to sing in our convents. The expedition travelled three leagues.

May 31—Sunday. Because the place was unsuitable we went on towards the northeast to a freshet of rain water, but with keen regret since this was the solemn Feast of Pentecost. There was a very heavy rain this evening and it continued most of the night. All the Religious sang the *Veni Creator*. Three leagues were travelled.

June 1—Monday. The first of June dawned raining. With a great deal of difficulty four Masses were celebrated, in which we besought Our Lord to grant us favorable weather, and the day cleared about nine o'clock. The place having quagmires and being unsanitary we proceeded after midday two leagues northeast as far as a large arroyo close to a good sized river, which we named San Francisco Xavier.⁶ Like the preceding rivers it is surrounded by woodland and abounds with fish. We travelled this day two leagues.

June 2—Tuesday. In order to give place to the celebration of Pentecost, this being but the third day of the octave, solemn Mass and the *Veni Creator* were sung, and the military salute given, some of the company receiving Communion.

June 3—Wednesday. We went on between east and east-southeast through a forest of sparse mesquite clumps, oak trees and grapevines, and very delightful glens, until we crossed a second time the Arroyo of the Animas. The bank at that place was very precipitous; so much so that some of the packs tum-

⁶ Rio de S. Francisco Xavier is now known as San Gabriel River in Milam County.

bled into the water. Coming out from the thick woodland we stopped in a shady plain near by. Two of our servants, having gone to look for bisons, lost their way in the denseness of the forest. The soldiers and three Indian friends went in search of them but did not find them. The place was named the Encampment of Santo Domingo; four leagues were travelled.

June 4—Thursday. Late Wednesday night we received notice of the approach of Don Luis de San Dionisio with some Indians and we sent word to him so that he could overtake us. Meanwhile the Community began a novena to St. Anthony of Padua and St. Francis Xavier, and a search was made for the lost ones. Don Luis arrived in the evening, and learning of the hardships he underwent, we gave thanks to God that we had not travelled through the forest where he came, because our way was the most clear.

June 5—Friday. Seven Masses were celebrated for the return of the lost ones. Not expecting, however, that they would appear miraculously sixteen Indian friends went out with the soldiers to search for them. They called them aloud, fired shots, and even made some smoke, but did not have the consolation of finding them. The ticks performed their duties.

June 6—Saturday. We went on in the direction of northeast about two leagues through a forest of oak trees and grapevines and some dried up arroyos. Following close upon this was another forest, so dense that there were not enough hatchets and knives to open a passage and consequently the packs suffered considerable damage. By way of south-southeast we came, at half past two in the afternoon, to a little shady place having a small spring of water, which we called the Encampment of Nuestra Sonora de la Soledad. We travelled, but with great difficulty, five leagues.

June 7—Sunday. The expedition stopped at this site while a passage was being cleared for the following day. Seven Masses were said. Although some bisons were seen not one of them was caught.

June 8—Monday. Having found a way, we went on between east and east-southeast, through an adjoining plain surrounded by trees, and entered a sparse forest of oaks and some walnut trees. We came to two springs of water, which we called San Diego, where wild grapes larger than the muscatel grew in abundance. Having crossed through another forest we stopped

at a very large lake which we named San Juan, and in which were many alligators. On our way through this forest we passed some clear plains with clusters of poplars. Four leagues were covered.

June 9—Tuesday. After Mass we advanced, between the points of south and southeast through an open forest where we found two springs of water. Travelling a league more or less, we reached a plain, and then crossed to the forest ahead where we stopped at some springs of water, which we called Santa Maria de Buenavista, because of the beautiful landscape. Here we encamped since a soldier had been lost in the forest pursuing a saddled horse that was escaping. This day three leagues were travelled.

June 10—Wednesday. We were detained for the aforesaid reason. Some of the company went to look for the soldier; and some Indians of the tribes Yeripiano, Ticmameras, Mesquites and one of the Asinai nation, the common Teja, arrived. All of them lived in a village seven leagues distant. This evening we sang our Vespers and Matins, and a sermon was preached, exhorting all to the spiritual celebration of Corpus Christi the following day.

June 11—Thursday. Feast of Corpus Christi. Six low Masses having been said, I sang the last, which was the seventh. This was celebrated with all the pomp which the wilderness permitted; the usual military salute given, many received Communion. The lost soldier came and the saddled horse was found. New Indians came to see us; and on that site a cross of wood was erected.

June 12—Friday. Going on through a not very dense forest of oak trees and grapevines, and passing a spring of water and some shady places, we came to the plain which runs towards the east and directed our steps to two small running streams. At the bank of one we met Indians of the tribes already mentioned who conducted us to their village. There they had made a hut for us, of branches of trees and very spacious, and there too, all the people who came, about 500 persons of all ages, kissed our hand. We travelled this day seven leagues.

June 13—Saturday. Feast of St. Anthony of Padua. We tarried here because the Indians told us it was necessary to take some rest on the way. We sang the Mass for the success of our journey, and the usual military salute was given. The

Indians were very good-natured. Among them were found the Pamayas, some Payayas and Cantonaes, some of the Mixcal and Xarame tribes with other of the Sijames. The dogs which they had, jumped in among the goats to amuse themselves with the kids. The Indians satiated themselves with the food that they exchanged, and what they had received gratis.

June 14—Sunday. We proceeded northward through half a league of level ground. In about another half a league, those of us who were going ahead were obliged to turn back because we had come to a very swollen arroyo. This evening the goats were put across, with the help of the Indians. Only one league was travelled.

June 15—Monday. We crossed the said arroyo, now become a river by reason of its abundant waters, which the Indians say is near to the river of San Xavier and the Arroyo of the Animas. The packs were carried across, but a laden mule was lost which, however, the Indians afterwards brought back. About a league from thence we came to the River of the Trinidad;⁷ which we recognized by the signs that General Alonso de Leon left to us in his diary, though he entered much further down, and came by a different route. This river too was swollen, and its banks very miry. We crossed partly undressed on horseback and conveyed the packs in leathern rafts, at which the Indians assisted. We stopped at the other bank. In the evening our two lost ones returned very crestfallen, but thank God, in good health. They related all their strange experiences, and told of the supply of meat with which the Lord provided them. Though reprehended they were well received. We travelled this day a league and a half.

June 16—Tuesday. We set out towards the northeast a quarter to east-northeast with some deviations to the east and north. Crossing through an open forest of oaks, we came upon an abandoned rancheria or village in a small plain surrounded by trees, and inhabited only by fleas which, in the shade of the trees, stung us; and the ticks got into our skin. Six bisons were killed, and two small ones were brought to the camp. Four leagues were travelled.

June 17—Wednesday. We, [the priests] occupied ourselves each one by saying Mass while some searched for a pack mule which had escaped. A new supply of meat was brought to the

⁷ River of the Trinidad. This is the Brazos.

encampment. The beast was found, as well as all the pack that he had previously lost.

June 18—Thursday. We went on by north-northeast through plains and forests of scattered oaks; then in the same direction, through hills and dales, having dry arroyos and trees on their margins, until we came to a small forest of walnut trees. Here on the way we met three Tejas Indians who were out hunting for bisons, and about noon two women also came and more Indians, about a dozen. They made peculiar demonstrations of pleasure. Having travelled five leagues, we stopped past a running arroyo, which we named Corpus Christi, because it was the octave of the feast.

June 19—Friday. Proceeding from this place northeast a quarter to east-northeast by an open pathway and a forest of scattered oaks we came to a running arroyo with many trees, and called it San Buenaventura. Having crossed a league of forest we stopped near a lake close by a shady plain which we named Santa Ana. This day's journey was four leagues.

June 20—Saturday. We advanced between east-northeast a quarter to the east through sparse forests of oaks for about two leagues, and two others over a plain. On arriving at the opposite border, a Teja Indian, one of those whom we had previously encountered, came forth to meet us and conducted us to his ranch, where he treated us to watermelons and *elotes*, green ears of corn. Afterwards more than twenty members of the Tejas tribe came, with much mirth and rejoicing. We travelled this day five leagues.

June 21—Sunday. We set out to find the pathway which we had left, and met on the way a flock of young turkeys, of which we provided ourselves for our midday meal. Then continuing northeast a league through a thin forest, and over level ground towards east-northeast, we came to a spring of water which we named Santa Clara. Captain Francis went ahead to interview the Governor of the Tejas and to prepare him for our coming. Others went to examine the place so as to make sure of a watering place for the following day. Having been notified that some water was near we stopped, as five leagues had been travelled.

June 22—Monday. We proceeded east-northeast over hills and plains; and after travelling two leagues came to a large lake which we named San Cristobal, an arroyo close by was

termed San Fernando, and a neighboring valley was called Lin-
 ares. Afterwards we came to another lake not very far distant
 and to this we gave the name of San Luis Obispo, and to an
 adjacent arroyo that of Santa Rosa de Viterbo. Here we beheld
 many high hills; and after making several deviations we crossed
 a plain where we met and befriended four families of Tejas
 Indians who were hunting bisons. Having entered an open
 forest, all on rough ground, we stopped past midday at a small
 lake, where we rested a little and took some refreshment. Con-
 tinuing our journey, we arrived at a very rapid river whose
 banks are deep and almost covered with trees. In scorching
 heat we travelled this day ten leagues.

June 23—Tuesday. While some went to repair the pass of
 the river and to make a bridge over a muddy stream, we said
 five Masses. Soon afterwards all crossed the river, which we
 named San Juan Bautista, because this was the eve of his feast.
 Then we walked about half a league through a thin forest of
 oaks in the direction of east-northeast.⁸ We crossed the muddy
 stream by means of the bridge and the expedition stopped at its
 margin. This river of San Juan, though sometimes mistaken
 for that of the Trinidad, is not the same by this route which
 we have just entered, although after one day's journey the two
 unite. That is the reason why many, who do not observe the
 directions by which they enter or leave the Tejas, cannot dis-
 tinguish the one from the other. The expedition walked this
 day half a league.

June 24—Wednesday. The morning was passed in celebrat-
 ing with high Mass and six low Masses the feast of the Holy
 Precursor. Some received Communion. In the evening the sol-
 diers amused themselves by running races and betting on their
 horses.

June 25—Thursday. The soldiers went with some Indians
 to take the goats across the river. The son of our captain and
 a Teja Indian arrived, bringing us news of Don Luis, and how
 he was engaged in assembling the Asinai Indians, who were
 still unaware of our arrival. In order to give him sufficient
 time [for his task] we did not travel this day.

June 26—Friday. After three Masses were celebrated we
 went on towards the northeast through a forest of scattered
 pines, walnut trees, common oaks, evergreen oaks, and grape-

⁸ River San Juan Bautista. This is the Trinity River.

vines with grapes larger than those already mentioned. We crossed two arroyos with water; and at one which we named Santa Efigenia (sic) we stopped early so as to give the Indians time to approach. Four leagues were travelled.

June 27—Saturday. We all celebrated Mass. News was brought of the approach of Don Luis with the Indians, and we got ready to receive them. About eight o'clock in the morning thirty-four Indians arrived, five of them being leaders. They came in file behind Don Luis, and were received in the following manner: We arranged the soldiers in two files placing our Captain in the center with the Religious, and in this order we went to greet and embrace them, our hearts overflowing with joy. In order to enter befittingly, the Indians left their horses behind, their bows and arrows and the firearms that some brought they left in the hands of other Indians who ministered to them as servants. There was a general salute on our part, and in the meantime we went to the place prepared for the reception, which was a hut of boughs of trees, carpeted with blankets; the pack-saddles serving as stools. There, all seated according to rank, a page of the Tejas drew out a pipe full of tobacco which they cultivate on their lands. The pipe was very much ornamented by white feathers—a sign of peace among them. He lighted the pipe and made each of us take a puff of smoke. We returned the compliment with the same ceremony and served chocolate to them. The function terminated with a very serious discourse by an Indian chief, in which he gave us to understand the pleasure with which all desired to receive us in their midst, as Don Luis de San Dionisio, (Louis of St. Denis) who understands and speaks much of their language, made known to us. This day was most pleasing to us, holding out, as it did, such great prospects of attaining our end and achieving the purpose so much desired. That night the Indians gave a salute and feasted on an ox which the chief served them at their pleasure.

June 28—Sunday. We went on, accompanied by many of the Indians, towards the northeast with some deviations to both sides, through a forest of scattered pines, walnut trees, grapevines, common oaks and evergreen oaks among which are four *arroyuelos*. Having travelled nine leagues we came to a large plain surrounded by trees, in whose center are two large lakes and nearby was a copious arroyo where we stopped. That evening, Indians numbering ninety-six, who had not yet visited us

came in the following manner: They assembled at a place near the camp and arranged themselves into three files. The middle one was led by Don Louis, followed by all the chiefs and leaders. The two side lines were composed of the remainder of the people who accompanied them. Besides these, the Indians who on the preceding day had come to meet us, were advancing at a short distance with their firearms in order to give a salute. We, on our part, reciprocated, the Captain bearing a standard on which were painted the images of Christ Crucified and of Our Lady of Guadalupe. We, the Religious, took our places on both sides in a wing, with the soldiers in two files, and thus advanced towards them. Our Captain delivered the standard into my hands, and kneeling venerated and kissed the Holy Images and we embraced each other. All the others did likewise. When this ceremony ended, we went in procession singing the *Te Deum Laudamus*, to which the firearms made response. Upon arriving at the encampment all knelt for the conclusion of the hymn. Then we seated ourselves with the Indians on the carpets of the preceding day. The Indians conversed among themselves for a little while, and each chief bringing a handful of ground tobacco they mixed it together to show the unity of their wills, then handed it to the Captain. Afterwards they brought their gifts of ears of corn, watermelons, tomales and cooked beans with corn and nuts. To them were distributed, in the name of His Majesty, the blankets, sombreros, tobacco and flannel for undergarments. And that night they demonstrated their joy with dances.

June 29—Monday. High Mass was celebrated in honor of St. Peter (in whose honor we gave this name to the place). It was attended by a multitude of Indians. Near midday others came with eight leaders, and with them were carried out the same ceremonies as with those of the preceding day in their reception, except that instead of the *Te Deum* the *Tota Pulchra*, etc., was sung. These brought their pipe of brass adorned with many feathers. Clothing was distributed to them as to the others, and they also celebrated their coming with dances.

June 30—Tuesday. Three Masses were said for the success of their conversion, and again we heard the echo of the *Ecce, ego mitto vos* from the first words of the Gospel of the Commemoration of St. Paul. Then we proceeded northeast through an open forest until we came to a plain which seemed to our Captain

to be a suitable place, for the time being, to establish his presidio, which was at the margin of a very large lake and not far from a medium sized river. The Religious went with the Captain and some Indians to choose a place for the first mission, and finding one that seemed the best for our purposes we returned to the encampment, having on the way appeased our hunger with cooked Indian corn, with nuts and other fruits of the earth, which the Indians gave us. The expedition travelled this day three leagues.

July 1—Wednesday. The Indians, who were still together, remained to construct a dwelling house for the Captain. It was begun this day, as well as the transferring of the implements and other things pertaining to the four missions.

July 2—Thursday. The house was covered with hay. Meanwhile each of the priests said Mass, and then we wrote some of the language of the Asinai. The Indians reasoned and computed and apportioned among themselves the four prospective missions, Don Luis serving as interpreter. Having recourse to a learned Indian woman of this tribe, reared in Coahuila, we gave them to understand, as best we could, the object of our coming; and from that time forth they advised us that they could not assemble until they had gathered their harvest.

July 3—Friday. All the Religious with the Captain came to a spring of water which we had previously found, and soon the Indians began to construct the house for the first mission. Meanwhile we passed the day in a hut of branches of trees; one league having been travelled.

July 4—Saturday. All the Religious said Mass. The house was finished although poorly [constructed] like a field shanty. We moved to it and distributed what appertained to each mission.

July 5—Sunday. The captain named *Alcaldes*, *Regidores*, and an *Alguacil*, and then came to give me, as President, possession of the mission in the name of His Majesty, (may God protect him) at the spring of water with the usual ceremonies. I appointed for Minister of the first mission, named "Nuestro Padre San Francisco de los Tejas," the Reverend Father Fray Francisco Hidalgo, who for so many years solicited this conversion. The Apostolic Preacher, Father Manuel Castellano, was appointed his companion and to him I entrusted the spiritual care of the assistants at the presidio. The greater part of

the clothing and other things which we brought for the Indians was distributed. This day our Captain, with the Apostolic Preachers, Fathers Fray Matias Sans de San Antonio and Fray Pedro de Santa Maria y Mendoza went in search of the place occupied by the Nacocdochi in order to establish their first mission on behalf of the College of Our Lady of Guadalupe of Zacatecas.

July 6—Monday. Towards northeast a quarter to east-northeast through an open forest, we crossed a stream of water which runs to the first mission.⁹ A plain of more than two leagues followed. We crossed three small streams and came to the first wigwam of Hinai Indians where we passed the intense heat of the day and took some ears of green corn for refreshment. After midday we went eastward through a sparse forest, and having travelled about two more leagues, we came to an arroyo with plenty of water. Further on there were poplars, walnut trees and oaks, and in the valleys many pines. Approaching other ranches of the Hinai, we met our Captain with the Fathers from Guadalupe of Zacatecas, who had not yet gone ahead. That evening we looked for a site for the Conception Mission, which we found, although it has a great deal of woodland. We travelled eight leagues this day.

July 7—Tuesday. I went with the Captain as far as two bubbling springs of water which do not seem large enough to supply the people of this village. The Captain gave me possession in the name of His Majesty as is customary. He then, with the Fathers of Zacatecas went to establish their mission. Meanwhile my two companions and I changed our belongings to the spring of water. In this task and in laying plans we spent most of the day.

July 8—Wednesday. The erection of the straw house was begun, though rather late, and the Father Fray Benito Sanchez went to the rancheria of the Nasoni, where he was appointed to establish the third mission on behalf of the College of Querétaro.

July 9—Thursday. Captain Francis Don Luis de San Dionisio and I went to the rancheria of the Nasoni, where we arrived after midday. It is located seven leagues northeast from the Conception Mission. There are on the way many ranches of Indians and arroyos of water with good places for settling. Father Fray Benito and I went out to make a survey, and our

⁹ Probably the writer refers to the Neches River or to the San Pedro.

Captain, who this day gave possession of the Mission of Our Lady of Guadalupe to the Fathers of Zacatecas, came from the Nacadochi.

July 10—Friday. The Captain gave me possession of the Mission of San Jose, among the Nasoni and Nacono Indians, near a good-sized arroyo which runs to the north. I appointed as their Minister the Apostolic Preacher, Father Benito Sanchez. Thus three Missions were founded, which number about three thousand souls according to what we have seen. I returned to the Mission of the Conception which I attend.

NOTE: The particular traits which we have observed in this people are their loyalty to their lands and the skill with which they construct their houses. These have high beds for everyone, and compartments of wood where large baskets of nuts and beans are stored for the whole year. They are very charitable among themselves and assist one another in their necessities.

They recognize a superior head, who directs them when they have to work, and there is one who gives them orders, and punishes them harshly when they do not go to work or if they are lazy. They have all the earthenware that is necessary for their service, and curious seats of wood for those who come to their houses. From what we have observed it will require solicitude and labor to eradicate a number of abuses to which they are addicted, since they hardly ever take a step that is not directed by some particular abuse. Time will reveal minutely the good qualities as well as the evil propensities of this people, to whom, may God Our Lord, through the inestimable price of His Blood and the supplications of His most pure Mother, open the eyes of their understanding to know Him and love Him, and with their whole heart serve Him, as the least of the missionaries desires.

ISIDRO FELIS DE ESPINOSA (Rubric)

July 30th of the year 1716.



